



MARYLAND ASSOCIATION  
OF CHAIN DRUG STORES

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**HB28 – Pharmacists - Aids for the Cessation of Tobacco Product Use**  
**Health and Government Operations Committee**  
**January 20, 2022**

**Position:** Support with Amendments

**Background:** Certain pharmacists would be authorized to prescribe and dispense nicotine replacement therapy products.

**Comments:** The Maryland Association of Chain Drug Stores supports the expansion of pharmacist authority proposed in HB28. We agree that greater access to nicotine replacement solutions would result in healthier communities; however, we have some concerns with the policy as drafted.

When this policy was previously proposed in 2020, it included language mandating the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to provide coverage for enrollees who would receive prescriptions for nicotine cessation therapy from an authorized pharmacist, allowing pharmacists to be adequately compensated for their service. The pharmacy community routinely struggles with receiving appropriate reimbursement for services provided, and these same tobacco cessation consultation and prescription services can be reimbursed when performed by physicians. The exclusion of this language from the current draft proposal is of particular concern for nicotine replacement therapy regimens which can also be administered through over-the-counter medications, allowing patients to fully bypass all medical service providers.

We would urge the committee to include the language from the previous version of the bill so that pharmacists can be adequately compensated for the proposed service. Thank you for your consideration.